

Groups Collaborate to *Grow* the Arts in Langdon

By Teresa Oe
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Langdon residents and others in the northeast corner of North Dakota are guaranteed artistic experiences year-round, thanks to the collaboration of several groups committed to growing the arts.

Carol Hart is executive director of the Northern Lights Arts Council, an organization incorporated in 1993 to encourage artistic opportunities in the area. She lists the many groups that help the council in accomplishing its mission. "We work closely with the North Dakota Council on the Arts, North Dakota State University Extension Service, Cavalier County, Cavalier County Museum, Cavalier County Library, Langdon Chamber of Commerce, Durum Triangle Piano Teachers, county schools and the local media," she says.

Together, these groups have built and promoted an arts agenda for the summer, of which the following are highlights.

"Wiz of the West"

Two directors from the Missoula Children's Theatre will arrive in Langdon in mid-July with the scenery, costumes, props, makeup and basic lighting needed to put on a play. Local students in kindergarten through grade 12 will audition on Monday, July 14, for roles in "Wiz of the West," an adaptation of the classic story "The Wizard of Oz."

By the 19th, the cast will be well-rehearsed, having learned lines, songs and choreography to perform as an ensemble in

producing a full-length musical. The young artists will dazzle audiences on Friday evening and again Saturday afternoon.

This is the 15th consecutive year that the Northern Lights Arts Council has brought in the Montana-based theater group to challenge local youth to grow their artistic ability and share it with the community. Missoula Children's Theatre sends staff all over the world, developing life skills in children

through participation in the performing arts.

Paul Lukach is one past performer who's benefited from the experience. Now a sophomore in college, he says, "It taught me to be outgoing, to be able to get up and speak in front of a crowd."

Justin Cheatley, a sixth-grader, agrees. Already having been cast in four plays, he speaks of the confidence

the theater has given him. He also appreciates the pastime as a social opportunity. "I've met friends in different grades that I wouldn't have otherwise," he says.

Cheatley's past characters have included a witch's servant, castle guard, dwarf and jackal. Audience members can expect to see him again in the cast lineup this year.

Free Beer at Music Fest

Steve Hart explains that when local band Free Beer got its start 14 years ago, members chose the band name as a marketing strategy. "We figured if we put 'Free Beer' up on the marquee, people would always come," he says with a chuckle.

In addition to marketing savvy, the band prides itself on appealing to a wide variety of audiences with an assortment of music ranging from classic country to rhythm-and-blues to rock-and-roll. Eight different instruments and singing voices make just about anything possible on stage.

Members are Jake Kulland, bass; Ted Delfs, guitar; Patrick Hoffarth, drums; Lisa Schuler, keyboards; Curt Kram, tenor saxophone; Kim Hart, alto saxophone; Steve Hart, baritone saxophone; and Dean Hoevern, trumpet. Three of the eight—

Free Beer band members posed for this new group photo when they were practicing last August and saw cold weather funnel clouds in the southwest sky. Pictured from left are Kim Hart, Curt Kram, Dean Hoevern, Lisa Schuler, Jake Kulland, Patrick Hoffarth, Steve Hart and Ted Delfs.



Langdon students from left, Rachel Cheatley, Justin Cheatley, Todd Cook and Andria Hart perform in the Missoula Children's Theater 2007 production of "The Jungle Book."



The Holy Trinity Catholic Church closed in 1968 and became the foundation of the Cavalier County Museum the following year. The museum hosts arts and heritage activities and is open for touring during the summer months.

Schuler, Kram and Kim Hart—are local music teachers.

The band will perform at the Langdon Music Fest and Street Fair on the evening of July 26. Hart says he's excited about this year's event because it's outside for the first time at Langdon City Park. Free Beer has opened for several big names at the Music Fest each year since 1996, including Three Dog Night and Loverboy. This year, the band will precede a performance by 32 Below.

Other artists will also have the opportunity to display their talent on July 26 through participation in the street fair. The fair features several booths of craftwork offered by individuals from Langdon and the surrounding area. Attendees are encouraged to peruse the exhibits while enjoying treats by local food vendors. Children can also make their own art—paper mache hats—with Northern Lights Arts Council volunteers.

Museum Events

About 12 miles from Langdon in the former city of Dresden is the Cavalier County Museum, consisting of a stone church, one-room country school house, library, log cabin, railroad caboose and two Quonsets filled with relics of the community past.

Those who enjoy historical art may be most interested in the architecture of the English-Gothic style church and its showcases of old sheet music, glassware, quilts, clothing, dolls and more.

The site is open for walking tours in the afternoon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through the summer months.

On June 22, area citizens will gather at the museum for the annual Thresher's Breakfast, "a good, hardy meal," says Sharon Lundgren, museum coordinator.

The breakfast is the museum's primary fundraiser and will feature entertainment from Tom Isern, a North Dakota State University professor and folklorist. Isern will sing folk songs and speak of arts, heritage and the richness of prairie towns. He has previously worked with local citizens as part of the university's Building Community Vitality Through Arts and Heritage program. Last fall, he led a workshop in Langdon to begin the development of a strategic plan to promote the cultural arts and heritage of the area.

Later in the summer, the museum will "come alive" with local participants reenacting daily activities of the pioneer era. The living museum is a new addition to the annual museum event titled "Something for Everybody." This year's program will take place during the afternoon of July 27, in conjunction with the Langdon Music Fest and Street Fair.

The final museum event for the summer will be a Labor Day flea market. In addition to browsing through the regular arts, antiques, automobiles and other artifacts of the museum, participants will be able to purchase goods produced by their neighbors and friends.

The Northern Lights Arts Council receives funding through the North Dakota Council on the Arts Institutional Support grant program.

For more information about the North Dakota Council on the Arts and its programs that support communities across the state, call 701-328-7590 or visit www.nd.gov/arts.



Since Langdon doesn't have a permanent place to display art, the Northern Lights Arts Council sets up "Art in Unexpected Places" exhibits in regularly visited businesses. Local farmer Lance Muhs created these pencil drawings shown at Choice Financial Bank in May.

More Langdon Arts events

Following is a list of more upcoming arts events and displays in Langdon:

June 18- August 14 **Art in Unexpected Places – Featuring artists Bobbi Johnson and Anne Cheatley**

July 30-31 **Explore the World of Art Day Camp Grades 2-8**

October 4 **Harvest and Heritage Festival**
- Birgit Hans: "The Star Quilt: A Symbol of American Indian Identity"
- Jessica Holkup: "Quilt Preservation"

Friday-Monday **Movies shown every week at Roxy Theatre**

